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MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF POLITICS.

THE political sky of Ireland, like its natural sky, has always been capricious, unbalanced and turbulent. The constituent elements, in both, appear in perpetual conflict, and never to harmonize, for any length of time, into a quiet serenity. "*Cælum crebris nubibus, et imbris fœdum,*" said old Camden, when speaking of our climate, and, in a short sentence, characterizes both the natural and political history of Ireland. Of late, however, both the natural and political sky have assumed a more settled aspect. A greater concord, a more perfect assimilation, seems to have drawn their respective elements into steadier union; and order and tranquillity will, we trust, be the result.

Many have ascribed our fine weather to the influence of the comet. The comet has, perhaps, as little share in this effect, as the one which appeared in France during the sickness of Cardinal Mazarin, had in his recovery. There were not found wanting courtiers at that time, who were no way ashamed of telling the *minister of the day*, that the comet had appeared to congratulate the world on his approaching convalescence. "Ah! gentlemen," replied the polite Italian, "the comet does me too much honour!"

Yet it is pleasing to see even the common mind cease to associate such appearances, with the calamities of humanity, and the visitations of divine vengeance, but would rather chuse to connect them with a more quiet and serene temperature of the atmosphere, with a joyous harvest, and a plentiful season. The rude and savage mind is terrified by such unusual appearances, and as-

cribes them to the demon of the tribe, never to the divinity of nature. In his view, the comet will spread from its horrid hair, pestilence, and famine, and death. But every step man advances in knowledge, he sees more of the beneficence of nature; and the extraordinary phenomena of the skies, are, in his contemplation, the *ascent* and *descent* of angels, ministering good to this or other worlds, and as one of *this* kind, he hails the lucid minister of the present day.

To what influence are we to attribute the grand phenomenon which figures at present so auspiciously in our *political* sky, not portending the pestilence, but promising all the blessings of peace, good order, and equality of rights—we mean the coalition and combination of the Protestants and Catholics of Ireland, in the furtherance of the emancipation of the latter, and their mutual welfare and prosperity? To what angel, what divine minister are we to ascribe *this* salutary interposition?—To the GENIUS of the British constitution, making its way through the shadows, clouds, and darkness, that at times rest upon it, and revealing itself from the haze of legal fiction, and professional ambiguity, in its native and primitive splendour; honest in its intentions, liberal in its dispensations, and looking with magnanimous contempt, on every plausible pretext for retaining the power of political persecution, disguised under the term—toleration.

If, however, malignant causes *must* be brought to account for natural effects, if the introduction of a comet in all its red-hot fierceness,

be necessary to account for the unexpected brightness of the political horizon, we should be inclined to think that the nucleus of this comet was contained within the wig of Dr. Duigenan. We should assert that from the admission of this portentous phenomenon into the privy-council of Ireland, may be dated a new era of things, and of public opinion. Such is the divine transmutation of supposed evils, into eventful blessings, that this globe of burning bigotry, with its bifurcated tail of proclamation, and circular letter, so awful in appearance, and so ominous in its warnings, will turn out an exhalation innocent in itself, but of most essential benefit, in rousing all that is man within the Catholic bosom, and awakening every social sympathy in the breasts of their Protestant brethren.

The pith and marrow of the learned Doctors' political pamphlets, the wings by which he himself, and several others, learned in the law, have flown up from the bar to the bench, lie in such sentences as the following:—"The people being the supreme power in the state, is *no* doctrine of the British constitution"—"the exclusion of the great mass of the people, *is* a principle of the constitution."—"the King acting in conjunction with his parliament, acts in conjunction with his people." "The majesty of the people is, really and truly, an irregular and unconstitutional phrase." On such phrases, and the practical paraphrase upon such phrases, have these men ascended the very top of the Protestant ascendancy, and there they sit like cormorants on the topmost branch of the tree of knowledge—in their profession.

Well, all this has, at proper seasons, been swallowed by readers *interested* in the doctrine, but never was it thoroughly digested. The

people may be insulted once and again, but in clay itself, and not less in human clay, there is still an elasticity. The enemies of freedom and franchise have of late, as we think most fortunately for the event, overleaped the pale of sound discretion. They have acted in direct contradiction and contempt of common sense. They have shocked the common feelings of mankind. They have roused a host of sensations the most instinctive, and of sympathies the most catching. They have identified and incorporated the case of the Catholics with every thinking man among the Protestants of Ireland. The cause is his own. He himself, his family, his latest posterity have an interest, equal to that of his Catholic neighbour, in the decision of a question where a right of nature is denied, where the right of petitioning is obstructed. The majesty of heaven receives the supplications of the most sinful mortal. But every pelting petty officer interferes his veto between a supplicant people and their constituted authorities, and what has this denial of a natural right effected? Why, thanks to Lord Manners and Dr. Duigenan, it has wrought a confraternity and coalition among the Protestants and Catholics of Ireland, which, without such means would not have taken place: it has dispersed into dust the plausible pretext of withholding the rights of the whole community, from a fear of disobliging a part; and it has supplied a solid argument to the wishes of the Prince Regent, in the pressing political necessity of conforming to the wishes and wants of the universal Irish nation. His best affections are already with that nation.

There is a sympathy between his *personal* and their *national* nature, both generous, frank-hearted, candid, and convivial; both kept down,

for a length of years, from a display of their native good qualities, by unfavourable times and circumstances; both circumvented and corded down by unconstitutional restrictions; both glowing to manifest themselves in their true character, and gloriously to belie the malicious whisperings of ostensible friends, and secret enemies. Yes—his best affections range upon the side of the Irish people, and on the same side, his best and truest policy. His honour, his honesty, and his interest, converge in his patronage of this people, and the *early* and *explicit* manifestation of his sentiments on the full recognition of the rights of the Catholics to a plenary enjoyment of the whole British constitution.

Never since the earliest period of British history, was the happiness or misery, the weal or woe of millions more intimately connected with the choice of conduct about to be adopted by a single man. The destinies of the human-kind in these countries will shortly depend upon the determination of an individual. A restricted prince, a restricted people, and a parliament uncontrolled by the constituent, dictating to the executive, and superceding the whole constitution.—Such an unnatural conjunction of things cannot exist. AN EMANCIPATED PRINCE WILL EMANCIPATE HIS PEOPLE, and the glorious result will be, unanimity, order, and peace.

The striking feature in the face of Ireland, during the last month, has been the agreement of the Protestants with the Catholics, in the expediency, and justice of emancipation, the matter, which, by many hitherto, was thought proper and peculiar, but is now, more truly, deemed common, and national. The council has been placed in a most awkward predicament. The Castle, in military phrase, has been *masqued*; and the

popular interpretation of the law, has made triumphant progress throughout the whole kingdom. Not a single county in Ireland which will not have appointed their confidential men to prepare a petition, and to confer upon the subject with the Catholic committee in the Metropolis. What may take place in the courts of law is yet to be seen, but the verdict of public opinion has *already* been declared. Privy councils may be divided, the judges themselves may already be in parties on the subject, but the people appear to be unanimous.

It is a great happiness that this subject is now considered merely in a *political* point of view, embracing all sects in religion, all ranks in society, and little, if at all under a religious aspect. It is in this latter, that the enemies of popular rights have contrived to disguise the question, and thus to raise, round the caldron, the ghosts of prejudice and the spectres of superstition. Matter indeed it is of constant wonder and lamentation, how men impose upon others by an abuse of the sacred name of religion, and often impose upon themselves. The *honourable* Arthur Hodges, who was lately executed at Tortola, for the murder of his negro slave, and who had been accessory to the murder of many more, in his speech, says "as bad as I have been represented, or as bad as you may think me, I assure you, I feel support in my affliction, from having felt a *proper sense of religion*: all men are liable to error, but I cannot but say that principle (of religion) is inherent in me." The word of the Scottish rebels under Montrose in the year 1744,—was "*Jesus*"—and *no quarter*," and thus it is with some at the present day who have Jesus, and religion in their mouths, but no quarter in their hearts, and who wish from party mo-

tives, and from personal motives, to keep down, from the claim of the common benefits of the British constitution, and under the most extreme hazard of the public tranquillity, to keep down, we say, the great majority of the Irish people, under the pretext of their being of the Roman Catholic religion. "For my part" said Dr. Johnson, that illustrious Tory, "I think all christians, whether Catholics or Protestants, agree in the essential articles, and that their differences are trivial, and rather political than religious." The pretext is religious distinction, the real purpose is the monopoly of political power. Vain speculations of eternizing, as it were, commercial monopoly, and political monopoly under all changes of times and circumstances, all vicissitudes of men and things, are the infatuations of imperial power, and have always led it to its ruin.

We cannot help thinking it an infatuation of this kind, which has of late set the law of the land in array against the rights of nature, which said, you may pray to your God, but not offer a petition to parliament. "Tont evenement," says Voltaire, "en amene un autre auquel on ne s'attendait pas." The unexpected consequence of thus closing up the usual, and natural channels of obtaining redress, has been an acceleration of internal union, of insular union, necessary, as we think, most necessary to the union of the empire.

We remember many years ago, to have heard a toast given by a gentleman once a patriot representative of a town in the neighbourhood, and afterwards (such is too often the progress of life and particularly of professional life) a convenient law officer, and adviser of the crown. With a face that seemed like an *auto de fe*, bloated with

political bigotry, and the blood of the grape, he filled his bumper with the following words, "External union but no internal union, external union soon, internal union NEVER." Now we trust, that, in the progress of some years, *both* will be accomplished, for notwithstanding the authority of the dead and of the living, we are sincerely of opinion, that without *both* being accomplished, really and substantially, *neither* of them will ever be realized. Without internal union the purposes of the legislative union will never be accomplished. The people of these kingdoms will never be incorporated without a faithful legislative union, in which the interests and rights of each and every branch of the empire is equally regarded. Without a faithful performance of *all* the conditions of the external union, both those expressed and those, *at the time, understood*, and binding upon every man of honour and honesty, without this be done, and that speedily, there never will, there never can be internal union, but eternal dissensions, feuds, and animosities will continue to be the inheritance of this unhappy island. Internal union is therefore absolutely necessary to external union, and external union will continue a parchment bond, a mere paper security, without the union of the hearts and hands of the whole Irish people.

We, therefore congratulate our country, and the whole empire on *this* union, being now likely to take place, promotive, as it will be, of peace, and good order, and perfecting, according to its true meaning, and original intention, the legislative union, by making it an UNION OF LAW AND LIBERTY. What once failed from causes reserved for history, reserved perhaps (if for no superior pen) for ours to show, will prove fi-

nally successful. First adventures are generally unfortunate, and those who embark in them, frequently lose their time, their fortune, and even their lives. The blood of Martyrs is said to be the seed of the church. The blood of political martyrdom is the seed of the genuine British constitution.

.....Yet still survives
Sow'd by your toil, and by your blood
manur'd,
Th' imperishable seed, soon to become
That tree, beneath whose vast and mighty
shade,
The sons of men shall pitch their tents in
peace,
And in the unity of Truth preserve
The bond of love.

The example set, first, by the lower ranks of society, is now beginning to be followed by the higher. The Protestant landholder, the men of profession, even the magistracy of the land, are now uniting with the Catholic in the cause of emancipation; and their sanction, their influence, their ability, and respectability will effectually repress the rashness, the indiscretion, or the self-sufficiency of those who might vainly pretend to seek for the blessings of liberty and peace, through the ways of turbulence and outrage. Nothing is so much wished for, at such moments as the present, by the enemies of the Irish people, as some intemperate act upon which they might weave the pretext of riot and insurrection, and class the whole community, with the crimes, or follies of individuals.

The very same process which took place in that memorable institution, the Volunteers of Ireland, is now progressive in perfecting the internal union of Ireland, and the very same causes have actuated both great events, the neglect and abandonment, the harshness, and ignorance of existing administrations. The

people, or rather populace, unprotected, and abandoned, voluntarily flew to arms. After defending their country, they wished to give it a value worth defending. They at length derived confidence and consequence by men of property and distinction, coming forward to the command, and, in this state of martial organization, Ireland became attended to, and the glorious results were a Free Trade and an Independent legislature. In like manner, those who first planned, and in a great degree put in practice the internal union of Irishmen suffered both the persecution of ministers and the calumnies of their countrymen. Another trial is made. Protestants of high rank, consequence, and what is called stake in the country, have at length held forth their hands of fellowship to their Catholic countrymen, and what in the case of the Volunteers produced a free trade and a free constitution, will, we pray God, in the present case, terminate in the permanent peace of the land, in the right understanding of its real interests, and in the glory of the British empire. We conclude the subject at present with repeating a sentence from the Indian Sanscrit, which we wish had always been the regulation of society in Ireland:

"The pomegranate has many partitions,
But the seed is equally red in them all;
Do not give an undue preference to a race
of men,
For the blood is equally red in them all.

Missionaries of various descriptions continue to traverse the land. The conversionists of the Jews have passed away. Geologists have succeeded to remark the dip and elevation of strata, our basaltic crystallizations, and the subterranean map of the country. Then come commercial speculators, and place before admiring eyes, sparkling prospectives of wealth

to come. Like quack doctors exhibiting their unfailing nostrums, and promising the speedy cure of our chronic weakness, our decline in trade, our consumption in revenue, our alarming falling away of customs and excise, by taking this here little bottle of exhilarating cordial brought from the East Indies, and that there little packet of powder from the western world. All our capabilities are calculated to a nicety. Every thing is exactly estimated, except the worth of the human creature. This one, kindly proposes to reclaim our bogs; that one, to establish anew our fisheries*; another, to explore our mines and minerals, and thus England acts as a man sending over his agents, and valuers to ascertain the possible returns of his newly acquired estate.—But as for the people, as for the living mass of humanity, as for the cultivation of the intellect, as for the harvest of heartfelt affection, as for enlarging the means and funds of education in a manner adequate to the wants and wishes of the great majority of the nation,—*there* is the melancholy void. Who shall fill it up? An unrestricted Regent and an impartial legislature.

During the last month, the Lord Lieutenant honoured this town with a visit; made polite, and appropriate answers to different bodies that addressed him (particularly to an address from the managers of the Academic Institution, now rising into public notice); and was *entertained* at or by a dinner given by the opulent citizens of Belfast. The customary toasts civil and military were drank

* Colonel Burton Conyngham got large grants from parliament for a fishery establishment in the north west of Ireland, built his town of Rutland, &c. but the capricious fish left the coast as soon as all was ready for their capture. The Colonel fished well on dry land.

upon the occasion, and as usual, the glorious Revolution of 1688.

In every situation as well as on the stage, there is or ought to be a decent and delicate regard to times, places, and persons. We would not, had we lived in those times, have given the toast of William the Conqueror in the presence, or in the hearing of the maltreated Saxons. In Wales, we would not give the memory of Edward the third. In Scotland, even at this day, we would not toast the memory of William Duke of Cumberland. There is we think a delicate, and, at the same time, unanimous attention to the feelings and recollections, particular names and events may summon up, which is characteristic of the gentleman, the man, and the soldier. We, for our parts, honour and respect the memory of William the III. but from the era of the legislative union, we should have dropt entirely the use of a toast or the revolution emblems, on the sole ground of it giving our fellow-countrymen offence. The toast has a different sense annexed to it when given in this country, and when it is given in Britain. *Here* it is a Party sentiment under the patronage of authority, that should be exclusively parental, covering the whole people, as a hen covereth her chickens. In *Britain*, the same toast is pure, and patriotic. *Here*, it is to be feared that in its double and disingenuous sense, the one party gives, and takes it in the most invidious meaning, not as commemorative of a bright era in the constitutional history of Britain, but merely as an occasion of flaring insultingly the flag of victory, in the face of our neighbours and countrymen. Well might Hamlet reject the poisoned cup when offered by his mother, and exclaim "*Is the union HERE?*" Are there not toasts anew, alike expressive of loyalty and liber-

ty? Why pass over magna charta and the bill of rights? Why not adopt in place of an invidious and insulting toast, the Hanoverian Succession, and let the Catholic pledge the Protestant in the bumper. In the mean time, a Catholic when asked for his toast after the glorious memory, ought always to give "the capitulation of Limerick." To an infraction of that treaty, does he ascribe his long humiliation. No Protestant would drink to the memory of William in the valley of *Glencoe*. The passing breeze would fling upon his ears, the last groans of men murdered in their beds. O let us not instigate our memories to the recollection of savage and sanguinary times; let us not, in the hour of friendship and festivity, pollute our tongues with the war whoops of party; let the union of these countries be not merely in name, but in good faith, good nature, generous behaviour and the kind courtesies of life; nor let bigotry, assuming the name of religion, arise from hell, to keep up eternal distinction and discord, among those whose hearts teem with tenderness and affection.

The legislature of the United States has been summoned to assemble a month earlier than usual, and until the communication be made from the President, the real causes of the negotiation with Britain, through the medium of Mr. Foster, will not be publicly known. It appears probable, that congress will bring all the points in dispute with Great Britain into discussion, and not dwell on any isolated point. A new code definitive of the rights of neutral powers, will probably be the result of the whole business, embracing the impressment of seamen, the paper blockades, and other subjects of grievance. A dispute about the first fire in the late naval rencontre is not likely to settle any thing.

The first fire may be said to have taken place in the affair of the *Cheapeake*, and American honour compromised at that time has been in a state of diplomatic parley ever since.

Napoleon aims at making as great change in the commercial, as he has done in the territorial aspect of Europe. His immediate object is to make America unite in the continental system, as, without such junction, the circle of exclusion could not be completed. The object of Great Britain has been to make that system inefficient and illusory, by making use of American vessels as a round about way of introducing British and colonial produce into Europe. The object of the United was, as long as she could, to temporize, and in the mean time to obtain the profits of their new carrying trade under the colour, and under the colours of neutrality. But this state of affairs could not last. While the Belligerents encroached on the neutral, the neutral endeavoured to make the most she could of the Belligerents. But the raging waves on the opposite shores have worn away the isthmus of neutrality. Napoleon has found, in frequent instances, that his excluding system was vain, unless America was brought into the circle. He therefore was ready to bid highest and soonest for her favour. According to her own law, she then co-operates with France, and excludes England. The non-intercourse agreement operates tantamount to an alliance with the continental confederation. All American vessels, carrying British manufactures, are confiscated by their own municipal law, and the decrees of Bonaparte may safely be repealed. America is indeed forced to forego the profits of the carrying trade, which no doubt she has sacrificed most unwillingly, and thus

unite in the commercial hostility against Britain. If she can avoid farther hostility, she will wisely do it, but the ends of France seem to have been accomplished, and America satellites her system. Whether Mr. Foster has, or may hold out superior inducement, so as yet to outbid France in the good graces of the United States, or whether he will take the course of threatening them with actual war, and denouncing the vengeance of Britain, a short time will discover. The crisis is certainly a most important one.

When once a downward tendency is given to a vast machine, the progress is accelerated by its own weight. So it appears to fare with our foreign relations. Our avowed enemies form by far the greatest part of the civilized world. Our allies are few, weak, and suspicious, and the only neutral power remaining, by our arrogant conduct we are driving to extremities. Of our enemies we have not now need to say much. They are under the direction of a man possessed of energy, capable of directing their powers of hostile annoyance, whether in the clash of arms, or the newer form of commercial prohibitions, to the fullest extent. Of our allies we have little to boast. Turkey, too haughty to bend to our views, and too weak to afford efficient aid to any side, can do little. Her semi-barbarous institutions are crumbling away, and her unwieldy provinces will probably, after the example of the royal spoliation of Poland, soon gratify the rapacity of her neighbours.* Sicily is suffering under an imbecile cruel government, oppressive to the people, and suspicious towards her intruding allies. The court of Portugal, aloof from the more active scenes of Europe, is probably not

pursuing a more enlightened policy, than when in sloth, misrule, and a complete apathy to the real good of the nation, the Regent and his ministers indolently reposed on the banks of the Tagus, while Portugal itself is now suffering under all the calamities of protracted warfare, and its miserable inhabitants are at a loss to distinguish between enemies, and those called allies, in the ferocity of their respective plunderings. The inhabitants of Alentejo grievously complain of the British orders to destroy the produce of their fields, lest it fall into the power of the French. If they had the power, they would undoubtedly say to both parties, "Leave us to ourselves." The assistance of allies is not less oppressive to them, than the hostility of their invaders.

Nor does it fare better in Spain. Figueras has fallen in its turn, and Cadiz remains a scene of intestine broil. The British Envoy has found it necessary to remonstrate by a public act against the suspicions, which are thrown out, probably with justice, against the British, while the feeble council of Regency seeks to allay the tumult by faintly echoing the language of the British minister. The Cortes do nothing for the good of the nation, but are now alarmed at the probable secession of the American provinces. The mediation of the British, under certain conditions, has been accepted. Probably nothing that can be done by the Cortes, would avert the crisis of American independence; their injudicious policy is likely to accelerate the crisis.

The United States of North America will probably soon be forced into the ranks of our direct opponents. At present it is an indirect and mitigated hostility. Congress is summoned to meet on the 4th of November, in consequence of a failure of the negociation with the

* For extraordinary Fact see Page 242.

British envoy. France has repealed her decrees so far as America is concerned, and Britain refuses to rescind her orders in council, unless France totally abrogates her decrees, and admits British produce into the countries under her power. It may be readily seen that America can have no pretext for interfering in the internal affairs of France, and can only ask for exemption from these decrees for her own flag. The demand on the part of Britain is conceived in that spirit of bullying which greater states assume towards those who appear to be weaker, and is of a piece with that conduct which has procured for her the title of Tyrant of the sea. Such conduct has only an appearance of carrying on conciliatory negotiation, without any pacific intention. As soon as a point is conceded, a pretext is set up for further demands, and on a calculation of the weakness of her opponent, and her own fancied power, reconciliation is by one subterfuge or another kept at a distance.

But these calculations may fail, America may be roused to an assertion of her rights, and we know the effect of the war of independence with that country. Without open hostilities we may also be greatly annoyed, and our sources of commercial greatness be materially cut off. The successive systems of embargo, non-intercourse and non-importation have aided the cause of American manufactures, and injured

Extract of a letter from the Hon. Robert R. Livingston of the State of New-York, to a southern correspondent.

Clermont, May, 25th, 1811.

"The quantity of fine wool that has been imported in consequence of the present state of things in Europe, and the number of Merinoes cannot fail very shortly to establish our manufactories. No less than 100 weavers have arrived at New-York in one ship from Ireland; 70

our trade at home.* We may be disappointed also if we calculate too sanguinely on the divisions of parties in America. A continuance of ill treatment may unite them more fully in a common sentiment. Robert Smith's pamphlet in opposition to the President Madison, appears to have made but little impression in America. Parties may reproach each other, as being peculiarly in the interest of Britain or France, but there is good reason to believe, that the government, and the bulk of the people are actuated by a feeling essentially American. A decided majority of the elections in 1810 was in favour of that party, which is unjustly, we believe, charged with being partial to France, and Timothy Pickering, the avowed partisan of England, has lost his election as a senator in Congress, from the state of Massachusetts. It has long been a favourite maxim with England, that the whole world should be subservient to her views, and exist only for her exclusive benefit, and many of the editors of the public prints have lent themselves as panders, to foster this unworthy prejudice, and "to fool the nation to the top of its bent," by attempts to magnify the division in America, in favour of the British monopoly of power. A remarkable instance of this kind lately occurred:—A New-York or Boston opposition paper stated that the American government were decidedly favourable to Foster's mission. The National Intelligencer, the demi-official paper, republished this paragraph with severe comments on the ignorance of the writer

had arrived a little before, and all were directly engaged in our cotton manufactories. Do not doubt that you will, ere long, find an advantage in turning your tobacco plantations into sheep-walks, and thus be freed from any dependence upon Europe."

as to the views of government. Our British editors gave the paragraph on the authority of the National Intelligencer, as an authentic test of the temper of America, without in the least noticing the flat contradiction given on the part of the Intelligencer. By such artifices does the press deceive a people who yield themselves too readily as dupes to such deceptions. The reflecting part of the community should be strictly on their guard, and withhold an implicit and indiscriminate confidence from the communications of the public prints.

Rome bids fair under the auspices of her new master, to exchange the apathy of an ecclesiastical court for the more active and profitable bustle of commerce. The trade in indulgencies which once roused the world to effect an important step in improvement, is now succeeded by the more honest labours of the loom, and we are told that extensive cotton manufactories are establishing in that city. Population will thus be increased.

On the other hand England feels the deplorable effects of war. According to an enumeration just taken, although the total numbers have increased since the last enumeration in 1801, the females are now found greatly to exceed the numbers of the male population.

Although apathy, and a state of servility running through all ranks too generally characterize the present times, yet symptoms of a better temper have been lately discovered in the spirited and united opposition to Lord Sidmouth's attempt to abridge the toleration act. The people have acquired a knowledge of their power, and of the benefit of co-operation in defence of their liberties. Imboldened by the victory obtained over an attempt for intolerance, for such Lord Sidmouth's scheme was, however misguidedly

ded and feebly conducted, we trust the petitioners for unlimited liberty of conscience will renew and increase their exertions to bring the business before parliament in the ensuing session. Last year they petitioned for the removal of all disabilities and disqualifications affecting Catholics and all classes of Dissenters. For such a liberal attempt to leave conscience unfettered every true friend to liberty must be a cordial advocate. This is the true way to unite Catholic and Protestant in one common cause, and joint interest, and we rejoice to see that the late proclamation contrary to the design of the authors of it, have united Protestant and Catholic in the support of one common principle, to leave conscience free from all attempts to enforce uniformity of opinion, or the vain attempt to set up a standard mind, to which without conviction, all should be constrained to conform.

Conceding to the just claims of the people who would do more to civilize and pacify Ireland, than the interchange of militias. When the measures of interchange was before Parliament, vapouring speakers talked that this intercourse would tend to civilize Ireland, by our militia seeing English manners, and our people acquiring a polish from the English and Scotch. How idle and frothy is declamation, whether uttered in a senate or by a mob! It would be well, if people would think before they speak or write. Some of these *civilizers of Ireland*, have already come among us, but we perceived in them no marks of superior civilization. We do not expect any good effects from the measure, whether taken as a military scheme, or a business of political precaution.

Among the documents will be found the resolutions of several of the Catholic meetings. We could not com-

veniently spare room for more, but we give these as a specimen of the spirit which now so generally pervades the nation. At all these meetings Protestants assisted in large numbers. The Catholics of the county of Antrim are to meet in a few days, in Belfast. We trust it will be numerously attended by their Protestant brethren, and that the inhabitants of Belfast will once more make strong indications that their former public spirit has not entirely deserted them and that the county of Antrim although among the last of the counties coming forward, will not be among the less animated on the occasion. To the commercial interest we may reasonably look for some renovation of public spirit. They are less dependent on government than the landed interest. Assisted also by other causes, the influence of the militia in furnishing convenient eleemosynary aids to the younger branches of their families and connections has gone far to place the landed interest of the country in a state of servile dependence on the smiles and favours of government.

Two corps of yeomanry in the vicinity of Thurles, commanded by George Lidwell, received an order to deposit their arms in a place of security, on the alleged pretext, that they would not be secure in the houses of the members of the corps, as they lived at a distance from each other. The commander and both corps immediately resigned, and thus testified that the slight put on them on account of their commander's spirited conduct as a magistrate supporting the legality of Catholic meetings, had missed of its aim, and recoiled on the heads of those who descend to such modes of petty irritation.

At a period like the present, on which hangs the future destinies of these islands, it is natural that all

people should look, with most extreme anxiety for the manifestation of the will of the Prince Regent. At times, a ray of hope shoots across our political despondence, and anticipates the renovated glory of the empire, and the resurgency of the British constitution. In the present mournful season of distress and anxiety, we indulge the pleasing hope that we shall be one of the channels to announce the commencement of a brighter and better order of things. We liken ourselves, in fancy, to those messengers in Scandinavia, who, after the long night and absence of the sun, are sent to the mountain-tops, to descry the first rays of returning light, and proclaim to the plain below, the festival of his resurrection. There is certainly a cloud of ambiguity which at present surrounds the conduct, and in consequence the character of our Prince; but this may suddenly disperse, and he may then display himself in his real qualities of candour, benevolence, and justice.

Et pater Aeneas jamdudum erumpere nubem

Ardebat—

Vix ea fatus erat, quum circumfusa repente,

Scindit se nubes, et in aethera purgat apertum—

Restitit Aeneas, claroque in luce refulsit, Os humeros que Deo similis—

DOCUMENTS.

BELFAST ACADEMICAL INSTITUTION.

Soon after his arrival in town, his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant received the following address from the Belfast Acade-mical Institution, presented by the president and a deputation of the managers and visitors :—

May it please your Excellency,

We the President, Vice-Presidents, Managers and Visitors of the Belfast Acade-mical Institution have eagerly seized the opportunity of your Grace's presence here, to